

## English E/III-A Reading Instruction and Practice Activities

### Expressions

All languages are full of expressions that are said in the same way, or almost the same way, by most speakers. **Fixed Expressions** are groups of words that ALWAYS go together in order to create a special meaning. These groups of words are often used in special situations. Semi-fixed expressions are similar to fixed expressions but they can be changed a bit depending on the situation. We will talk about semi-fixed expressions next week.

### Examples

Fixed Expressions	Semi-Fixed Expressions
a. Social Greetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good morning!</li> <li>• Happy New Year</li> <li>• Merry Christmas</li> <li>• What's up?</li> </ul> b. "Guide Book" English <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May I take your order?</li> <li>• How long will it take?</li> </ul> c. Idiomatic Expressions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hang on!</li> <li>• Get out of here!</li> <li>• Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.</li> </ul>	Hi, Tom, I haven't seen you <u>in ages</u> . <span style="padding-left: 150px;"><i>in a while.</i></span> <span style="padding-left: 150px;"><i>forever.</i></span> What was really <u>interesting</u> was . . . <span style="padding-left: 150px;"><i>surprising</i></span> <span style="padding-left: 150px;"><i>annoying</i></span>

### Fixed Expressions

Today we will concentrate on Fixed Expressions. The most difficult thing about fixed expressions is recognizing the expression and knowing *all* the words that are included in the expression. For example, look at the following sentence and circle the fixed expression.

**Since he is an incredible coward, my brother tends to stick his head in the sand whenever he experiences something unpleasant.**

You should have circled "stick his head in the sand" because this is a fixed expression which means to ignore a problem and hope it goes away. In order to understand this fixed expression, however, you have to know which is the first and last word in the expression and what "special meaning" the expression might have. This special meaning is often quite different than the "actual meaning" of the words.

Another difficult thing about fixed expressions is that although both Japanese and English have fixed expressions which have the same meanings, unfortunately, these meanings are often expressed in very different ways and sometimes there are expressions in Japanese that have no equal in English, and vice versa.

## Practice Activities

**Activity 1** Circle the fixed expression(s) in the following sentences.

1. What are you going to do today? I thought I would just hang out in the bookstore and kill time.
2. I really need to ask my boss for a raise. With all my expenses, I seem to be in the red every month.
3. Mary was completely surprised about Bob's proposal of marriage. She said it was totally out of the blue and she didn't realize he was so head over heels for her.
4. I told you the Lakers would win the NBA Championships. Yeah, you hit the nail on the head there.
5. John likes telling tall tales. It's pretty hard to swallow a lot of what he says.

**Activity 2** With a partner, first, circle the fixed expressions in these sentences and then write a translation of that expression in Japanese.

English Expression (circle the fixed expressions)	Japanese Expression
1. Here comes the boss, so quit shooting the breeze and get back to work.	
2. I was the only foreigner at the party and I really felt out of place.	
3. Let's double check with the teacher about next week's assignment.	
4. I am sorry I can't go out this weekend, but I am a bit short of money until pay day.	
5. Is the party over already? Wow, time flies when you are having fun.	
6. The money I have saved in the bank is a drop in the bucket to what I need to buy a new car.	
7. Why do I bother telling you anything? Everything I tell just goes in one ear and out the other.	
8. He's been in seventh heaven since he passed the entrance exam to Todai.	

## Reading-in-Detail Activities (continued from homework)

**Activity 3 Reading Aloud** With your group, read today's articles *out loud*. Take turns reading the articles sentence by sentence. Try to read each sentence from start to finish as smoothly as possible. Don't read like a robot and don't use KATAKANA ENGLISH.

**Activity 4** Each of the words below is part a fixed expression. Find these words (**in bold print**) in today's articles and then write the other words that are part of that fixed expression. Then, write how that expression might be said in Japanese.

Sentence from Reading Selection with circled fixed expression	Japanese Translation
ex. (breath) (not) holding her breath	あまり期待しません
1. (foreign)	
2. (smoking)	
3. (economy)	
4. (winds)	
5. (doubt)	
6. (take)	
7. (hand)	
8. (out)	
9. (on)	
10. (avail)	
11. (first)	
12. (hip)	
13. (hooked)	

**Activity 5 Group Discussion** For the time remaining, discuss the following questions with your group.

1. Would you go to a coffee shop that banned smoking? Why/Why not?
2. Do you think it is appropriate for coffee shops (restaurants, airports, bars, etc.) to ban smoking? Why/Why not?
3. In your opinion, is smoking fashionable? Why/Why not?
4. Are you a smoker? If yes, why do you smoke? What are the good points to smoking?  
If no, why don't you smoke? What are the bad points to smoking?
5. What other "bad habits" do you have? Why haven't you quit when you know it is bad for you?
6. What is the most annoying habit that a person you know has? Why does it bother you so much?
7. Look at the Health Warnings from different countries. Do you think cigarette packages should carry strong health warnings like Canada, very weak health warning like Japan, or no health warnings? Why?
8. (your question) \_\_\_\_\_ ?

**Activity 7 Discussion Summary** Take a few minutes and think about what you and your groupmates discussed in class. Then, write a summary of your discussion. Please use all the space available.

Score: \_\_\_\_ /10

[illegible]

## Answers to Activity Two

	English Expression	Japanese Expression
1.	to shoot the breeze	油お売る
2.	to be out of place	場違い
3.	to double check	駄目押しする
4.	to be short of money pay day	懐が寂し 給料の日
5.	time flies	光陰矢の如し
6.	a drop in the bucket	焼け石に水
7.	in one ear and out the other	馬の耳に念仏
8.	to be in seventh heaven	有頂天になる

## Answers to Activity Four

English Fixed-Expressions	
1.	foreign-born
2.	to prohibit smoking
3.	the bubble economy
4.	the winds of change
5.	no doubt about it
6.	to take up the slack
7.	on the other hand
8.	to go out drinking
9.	to go on and on
10.	to no avail
11.	in the first place
12.	to be hip
13.	to be hooked on